THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The table given below indicates the trend of crude oil production in the North Eastern states during the past three years:

Company/State	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99* (Apr.-Dec.)
ONGC	1.964	2.046	1.557
OIL	2.870	3.094	2.477
Pvt/JV	0.013	0.014	0.032
Total	4.847	5.154	4.066

•Provisional

As against the target of 4.025 MMT during April-December, 1998, the production of crude oil was 4.066 MMT.

(c) and (d) Current level of crude oil production in North East is lower than total refining capacity in Assam after Numaligarh Refinery is operational. In order to supplement crude supply to North East refineries, imported crude supply to BRPL from Halida-Barauni and reverse pumping from Barauni through oil India pipeline has been planned.

Utilisation of Oil Pool Fund

390. DR. B.B DUTTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present position of Oil Pool Account;

(b) whether this position is satisfactory,

(c) how Government propose to use this fund; and

(d) whether there is a proposal for utilising this fund for meeting subsidy obligations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) With a view to contain the deficit in the Oil Pool Account and to enable the Oil Companies to maintain uninterrupted supplies of petroleum products in the country, the Government announced a comprehensive package on September 1, 1997. To end the oil pool deficit, the Government had decided that part of the liabilities of the Oil Coordination Committee to the Oil Companies shall be cleared through issue of Special Government Bounds by making one time payment to the Oil Companies. Consequently "10.5% Oil Companies (Non-Transferable) Special Government Bonds 2005" totaling to Rs. 12,984 crores were issued by the Government to the oil companies effective 02.043.98. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 6382 crores has been sanctioned for redemption of Bonds. Thereafter, "On Account" payments of Rs. 781 crores have been made till 31.01.99. the balance amount of bonds is about Rs. 5821 croes as on 31.01.99.

Price Hike of LPG

391. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently hiked the price of LPG just only few days before the General Budget;

(b) if so, the reasons and justifications thereof;

(c) whether the common man have been affected due to price hike of LPG;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to review its decision and would bring down the price hike; and

(e) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?